



National Alliance on Mental Illness

**NAMI FAR NORTH IDAHO 2019
Annual Report
On
Programs and Services**

**NAMI Far North's mission is to improve the quality of life
for all those affected by mental illness.
We pledge to be respectful and reject stigma and to
support, educate and advocate for those with mental illness.
We send the message, "You are not alone."**

NORTH IDAHO CRISIS SERVICE : NICS is in the fourth year of providing a Crisis Service Line to Bonner and Boundary counties. It operates after hours with 8 contracted licensed clinical mental health professionals and one ½ time clinical director. **Catherine Perusse.** These individuals answer the phone line between the hours of **5:00 p.m. – 8 a.m. Monday thru Friday..24 hrs. a day on Sat, Sun, and Holidays. Crisis Line # 208-946-5595** Catherine Perusse is our main spokesperson who is called upon to speak to civic organizations, schools, churches, round table discussions on mental health and community centers about Nami FN and our Crisis Service. We continue to reach out to the community by distributing flyers for our monthly meetings, cards, brochures, and becoming a member or volunteer at events. Information posted at strategic places in the community, such as, town bulletin boards, public libraries, physicians offices, BGH ER, on NAMI FN and NICS websites. NICS continues to work to update and increase our resources and referral information. We appreciate the generous support from the partners listed below and to individual supporters. This support validates the importance of a locally based Crisis Service. It is a resource that is greatly needed in our community. We will continue to build our donor database and aggressively seek out new grant and funding opportunities. We continue to provide **Transportation to NI Crisis Center in Coeur d' Alene.**

**NAMI Far North
Bonner County Human Rights Task Force
Equinox Foundation
North Idaho Action Fund
Inland Northwest Community Foundation
Sandpoint Leadership Alumni
Idaho Community Foundation
Sandpoint City Police Department/Bonner County Sheriff Dept.
Prayer Flags of Hope : Linda Heisel
Numerous Private Donations**



NAMI FAR NORTH IDAHO SUPPORT AND EDUCATION

Support/Educate/Advocate at NAMI FN Monthly Meetings

We provide education and support for our members and the general public by recruiting speakers, at our monthly meetings, who address topics of interest to those with mental illness and their loved ones who care for them. We believe by educating the public, we will provide a stigma-free community.

Due to our commitment to implement our signature programs: NICS, Family-to-Family Course, and being present at community events, we have increased the size of our monthly meetings. In order to accommodate the increase we moved to the VFW Hall in Sandpoint. Our **General Monthly Meetings** are the **3rd Wednesday of the month...5:30 p.m.** We are proud of our support groups that follow after the speaker. We have received positive feedback on how this support is helpful. Our **Family Support** Group is facilitated by a trained member, **Amber Snoddy**. This group is for those, family and friends, who are caregiving their loved ones with mental illness. **Jan Burt** is the trained facilitator for **Connections**. This support group is for those with mental illness.

Due to the increase in our friends and members of our organization NAMI FN was able to fund training for 2 people to be facilitators, one for the Family Support Group and one for the Connection Group. We are excited to welcome Shon and Jennifer to our team.

We are proud to provide a safe, non-judgmental, compassionate atmosphere. These groups learn to provide shared coping skills and offer each other empathy and encouragement.

There seemed to be a need to meet more than once a month for the Family Support Group, so they have set aside a time and date for a NAMI FN informal meeting.

Signature Program/Free/Family-to-Family/Education

This program supports and educates family and friends of individuals with mental illness.

Amber Snoddy, Evelyn Miller and Dawn Mehra have been trained to facilitate this signature program. This year, 2019, the Family-to-Family 12 week course was offered in the Spring. We have observed that the participants of this class become connected by sharing their stories. We develop a support network by keeping in contact with the class members. NAMI FN provides a one year open door membership for the attendees. Our purpose is to encourage the group to stay involved by attending our General Meetings and to volunteer for events and train to take on a leadership roles in our programs. This has been successful. We have a couple from this class who will be trained to facilitate our Family-to-Family course in May of 2020.

Amber Snoddy and Dawn Mehra have recertified for the new updated version of the Family-to-Family class for 2020.

Free/Family and Friends Seminar/Mini version of F2F course/2020

Amber Snoddy and Dawn Mehra completed the training to facilitate this new program. We are excited to bring this 4-hour seminar that informs people who have loved ones with a mental illness how to best support them. Along with this course is a companion ebook that can be downloaded free. This is a beneficial program for those people who have time restraints. We will give it a Go!



Conduit of Care Program

This program provides our **State Hospital North**, located in Orofino, help support the patients to ease their transition back into communities. **Gini Woodward**, is the facilitator of this program. NAMI FN has a budget that she works and coordinates requests from the State Hospital on the needs of their patients, whether it is blankets, socks, mittens, toiletries, etc...

This is NAMI FN 3rd year to hold a **Christmas and Valentine** Card Project. Members and Friends of NAMI FN gather together and create/write notes of kindness and caring to express to the patients that we care about their well being. They have appreciated this gesture of caring and support. This project provides our members a feeling of purpose.

NAMI FN Membership

Actively recruiting new members. Jessica Rachels voted on to NAMI FN Board. We are encouraged with her knowledge of advocacy. She will keep us updated on current issues dealing with mental health in our capital, Boise.

Our members make a big difference in our resolve to provide support, education and advocacy to those with mental illness and their caregivers. We want to make a change in our community by advocating for mental health awareness. We want to send a message "You Are Not Alone".

Our movement is to Cure Stigma. We believe by members sharing their stories help this resolve and encourages others to share their experiences.

Eileen Esplin compiled and updated our Membership Rooster. She, also, designs our General Meeting flyers and program flyers. This has streamlined the process of reaching out and posting upcoming events and information to our members and supporters of NAMI FN. A monthly newsletter goes out with pertinent information.

In 2019, our membership has stayed steady. There is a need to keep track of new, renewal, lapsed members.

Advisory Council:

This group of professionals and members/friends of NAMI FN make themselves available to our organization if we have issues and in need of expertise input or any help needed at our events.

We continually add to this Advisory Council of Volunteers to a list of 25+.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECTS

Christmas and Valentine Card Event/Patients at State Hospital North

Uptown Bagel Co./Eat In for Ethan/ 3rd Thursday of Month/ Percentage of sales to NAMI FN

Bonner County Fair 2019/Informational-Interactive Booth/Raffle of Prayer Flag Set

Forest Bird School Family Connection/Informational Booth

East Bonner County Public Library/Mental Health Symposium/Informational Talk



H.O.P.E. Walk/ Informational Brochures/ Suicide Prevention Awareness

Farm to Table Fundraiser/ Dinner/Raffle Baskets/Public Awareness of NAMI FN

All Events published in local papers...brought more awareness to NAMI FN

Linda Heisel is dedicated to replace the stigma on those with mental illness with Hope. She has successfully created awareness of the need for our North Idaho Crisis Service through her sales of **Hope Prayer Flags**. Her mission is her Flags be placed homes, school classrooms, businesses and places far and near , as a reminder of never giving up Hope. All proceeds of the sales go to **NICS**. She has donated over **\$6,000**. She is an example that one person can make a difference. These flag sets of Hope are sold in local business and Facebook which seems to start conversations on mental illness.

We actively seek out ways to share our mission in the community with these and many other Outreach Projects. It makes a positive impact on Curing Stigma which is placed on mental illness. It gives courage to those who are affected by mental illness to reach out for treatment and know recovery is possible.

NAMI FN ADVOCACY

We encourage our friends and members of NAMI FN Idaho to contact our representatives :

Senator Jim Woodward, House Rep. Heather Scott and House Rep. Sage Dixon in District

1. This year we invited Senator Woodward to speak at one of our General Meetings. It is important to talk to our politicians and share concerns of mental health issues, for example, better coverage and affordable housing for those with mental illness. There have been proposed changes in Medicare coverage on prescription drugs and a proposed work requirement for the disabled through Idaho Medicaid Expansion that will affect those with mental illness. Our politicians need to maintain protections on coverage which helps those with mental illness to get treatment. This would allow them to stay in school, on the job and recovery.

Advocate, Gini Woodward, says “ No one sets out to be homeless, incarcerated, hospitalized, die of suicide, or face an accidental early death. Policy makers need the education to give priority to people affected by serious mental illness, the most difficult task.” By speaking up and having our voices heard encourages Hope.

NAMI FAR NORTH TECHNOLOGY

Victor Vosen, tech man and Board Member, has updated our **namifarnorth.org** website. It is more user friendly. We are able to post our General Meeting flyers/Speakers/Topic on our website and also on **Facebook**. It has been beneficial to post our NAMI FN events and provide links to mental health resources in reaching out into the community.

We added AmazonSmile / Amazonprime Smile which we receive a Percentage of sales which has added to our donations. We have been encouraging our members and friends of NAMI FN to use this easy way to contribute to our nonprofit.



On the website: namifarnorth.org there are 3 options: **North Idaho Crisis Service NICS Monthly Meetings and Programs**. To accommodate those who would like to donate monthly, we have set up a **Paypal account** that will accept monthly payments. We hope this website will help to educate those who want to learn more about NAMI Far North and North Idaho Crisis Service and our efforts to support those with mental illness and their families.

Respectively,

Ellie Lizotte/President of NAMI Far North Idaho

P. O. Box 2415, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864 — *NAMI Far North* is a 501 (c)(3)
www.NAMIFarNorth.org NAMIFarNorth2003@gmail.com
(208) 597-2047 — Help Line (208) 946-5595 — Crisis Line



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